

## **AGOA Spurs Innovative Tube Sock Manufacturing Project in North Carolina and Ghana**

With assistance from the USAID-funded West Africa International Business Linkages (WAIBL) program, Southeastern Yarn Sales of Charlotte, NC, and Overseas Knitwear Fabric Ltd. of Accra, Ghana, have initiated one of AGOA's most innovative joint ventures. Southeastern Yarn manufactures unfinished sock tubes in North Carolina from fabric produced in the United States. It then ships the sock tubes and packaging materials (price tags, bags, etc.) to Accra. Overseas Knitwear then stitches, bleaches, pairs and packages the socks, and re-exports them to the United States under AGOA. The company ships approximately 40,000 dozen athletic socks to the United States each week. Because of this relationship, Overseas Knitwear has expanded its factory and added 300 new jobs. In August 2001, the Export-Import Bank approved a medium-term guarantee of nearly \$500,000 for the sale of new and used manufacturing equipment to the plant.

During the last year, Southeastern Yarn has worked with Senegalese and Malaysian partners to open an apparel factory in Dakar, Senegal. Currently, the factory is producing apparel for domestic use, but hopes to soon begin exporting apparel to the United States. In 2005, the Export-Import Bank secured an approximately \$3-million loan for the factory to import equipment from the United States.